

Opening Statement of the Honorable Ed Whitfield
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Energy and Power Subcommittee Vote on H.R. 1582, H.R. 1900, and H.R. 83
July 9, 2013

(As Prepared for Delivery)

We are here today to consider three important bills: H.R. 1582, the “Energy Consumers Relief Act of 2013” sponsored by Dr. Cassidy; H.R. 1900, the “Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act” sponsored by Mr. Pompeo; and H.R. 83, sponsored by Ms. Christensen.

The “Energy Consumers Relief Act of 2013” is a critical piece of legislation that will finally put some inter-agency checks and balances on the EPA, an agency that in my opinion is single handedly controlling nearly all of the energy and environmental issues facing our nation. The number of major new rules coming out of the EPA is like nothing I have seen before, especially those aimed at destroying the coal industry. In fact, just last week, EPA released it’s “Regulatory Roadmap” which outlines EPA’s plans to regulate – in addition to new and existing coal-fired power plants – everything from pollution runoff from military ships to landfill methane emissions to formaldehyde emissions from particleboard and plywood. No sector of the U.S. economy is safe from EPA’s overreach.

Importantly, the “Energy Consumers Relief Act” gives the Department of Energy the lead role in conducting a multiagency analysis of EPA energy-related rules estimated to cost at least one billion dollars. No longer will the impacts of these measures on energy prices, jobs, or manufacturing competitiveness be a secondary consideration that is hidden from the public’s view.

It is now more important than ever to weigh the consequences of EPA’s actions. The U.S. is on a pathway to unprecedented energy self-sufficiency thanks to technological innovations that have allowed us to safely tap the nation’s abundant energy resources. Without the additional checks and balances provided by H.R. 1582, this pathway will remain threatened by an agency that fails to provide the American people with a transparent and accurate picture of the sweeping cumulative impacts of its own regulations. For these reasons, I encourage all of my colleagues to support H.R. 1582.

Equally critical is Mr. Pompeo’s legislation, H.R. 1900, which is a bipartisan bill that would modernize the federal review process for natural gas pipeline permit applications. Our nation’s energy landscape has been dramatically transformed over the last decade, but our energy infrastructure still lags behind. To take full advantage of our abundant natural gas supplies, we need a new, modern pipeline system.

By making commonsense reforms to the natural gas pipeline permitting process, Mr. Pompeo’s legislation will allow new pipeline projects to come online safely and efficiently to help meet the nation’s needs for affordable and reliable energy and help create jobs. I encourage all of my colleagues to support H.R. 1900.

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